



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Hoosier Business Community Unites to Launch Alliance for a Healthier Indiana

INDIANAPOLIS – Today the Alliance for a Healthier Indiana, a coalition of health care professionals, advocates, community and business leaders from across the state, announced its formation to work toward improving the health status of Indiana.

“The health of Hoosiers is not something that we can afford to take lightly,” said Bryan Mills, CEO of Community Health Network. “Having healthy citizens is vital to the state’s economy and to our quality of life. We recognize that Indiana faces some important health challenges. It is going to require a focused plan of action and the support of state legislators, hospitals, the business community and all Hoosiers to significantly move the needle.”

The Alliance is made up of organizations representing diverse interests across the state. Members include the Indiana Hospital Association, the Indiana Chamber of Commerce, Indiana State Medical Association and Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield in Indiana. Additional partners will be announced as the coalition grows. The Alliance for a Healthier Indiana will take on pressing Hoosier health issues, including opioid abuse, obesity, infant mortality and tobacco use.

“The health status of our state directly correlates with the health of our economy,” said Mills. “An unhealthy workforce impacts Indiana’s ability to attract quality businesses, increases health care costs and harms Indiana’s national reputation.”

Indiana is ranked 41st in the nation for the overall health of its citizens. It is below average in 25 of 34 measures and ranks among the worst in the nation in the following categories according to America’s Health Rankings’ [report](#):

- 35th Worst in Drug Deaths
- 36th Worst in Infant Mortality
- 44th Worst in Percentage of Smokers
- 44th Worst in Obesity
- 48th Worst in Public Health Funding

In 2017, the Alliance will focus primarily on tobacco use as the leading cause of preventable death in Indiana.

“Tobacco use is a pressing challenge in Indiana, where nearly 23 percent of the population smokes and 4,100 young Hoosiers across the state start smoking each year,” said Mills.



Tobacco costs Indiana \$6 billion annually, taking into account health care costs and lost productivity due to smoking-related diseases and smoking on the job. Additionally, secondhand smoke costs Indiana \$2.1 billion dollars in excess medical expenses and premature loss of life.

A further announcement will be made on Dec. 8 by Tobacco Free Indiana with details on a campaign to raise the state tobacco tax and increase funding levels for cessation and prevention in the coming session of the Indiana General Assembly. The Alliance for a Healthier Indiana will also work toward raising the smoking age from 18 to 21 and repealing special treatment for smokers.

For more information on the Alliance for a Healthier Indiana and the health care issues facing Indiana, visit HealthierIndiana.org.

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About the Alliance for a Healthier Indiana

The Alliance for a Healthier Indiana is a group of health care professionals, advocates, community and business leaders across the state who are committed to improving the health of Indiana. For more information on the Alliance for a Healthier Indiana and the health care issues facing Indiana, visit HealthierIndiana.org.

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